

PLH 6/27/74

I. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- (KEEP
BRIEF)
(LAY
AUDIENCE)
- A. Central ~~xxx~~ role of the informant problem in the WC investigation, as presented in Ford's book.
 - 1. Brief summary of facts and Texas source
 - 2. The 1/27 meeting was where the Commission decided what to do.
 - B. Recent developments leading to release of transcript
 - 1. Ford testimony (perjury) at confirmation (?) hearings - no ~~x~~ classified material used.
(Newsweek (?) reported that Warren had told him ~~x~~ not to use this stuff)
 - 2. Suit by Weisberg
 - A. Material had been requested by various critics, turned down.
 - B. HW lost, but not on 'classified' exemption. Appeal filed, then release due to 'mandatory review'

II. NEW INFORMATION IN THE TRANSCRIPT

- A. Little about the allegation itself. (See IVA for that.)
The Commission's later "investigation" is put in ~~xx~~ perspective:
- B. The Commission was more aware than we knew earlier of the problems raised by their situation:
(This should be the first substantive section - documented with the juiciest quotes)
 - 1. The problem of ~~xxx~~ not alienating Hoover
(Summarize the ~~xxxx~~ 'debate' between the Warren~~xx~~ and Rankin positions - this is what the discussion is mainly about, and it is not very clear from the raw transcript, even to me. That is, the question of ~~xxx~~ whether to approach the issue "from the end of the rumormongers" and/or "the end of the FBI" (P. 162.9) was not decided on the basis of which would produce the facts, but on avoiding the unavoidable impression that Hoover's probity was challenged.)
(I am sure there are a couple ~~xxx~~ short ~~xxx~~ juicy quotes which would go here, but I can't locate them offhand.)
 - 2. The utter worthlessness of a categorical denial that Oswald was and FBI or CIA agent.
(Quote from Dulles admissions, pp. 153-4)
 - 3. The strained relationship between RFK and JEH, and the possible effect of a Commission request that he check out the rumor.
(Quote from pp. 136-7, all 2 paragraphs; also maybe p. 147; also maybe p. 161.6-10.)
 - 4. The ~~f~~ difficulty raised for the WC by the FBI's conclusion already that Oswald was the lone assassin.
(Quote from pp. 171.7-~~xx~~ 172.1)

(Perhaps these 4 points would go better in the order 2,3,4,1; or some other way. My idea here would be to pick out the juiciest quotes and present them with just the necessary analytical framework.)

III. WHY WAS THIS RELEASED NOW, AFTER 10 YEARS

- A. "Innocent" reason: to moot the Weisberg case
 - 1. Summarize the legal history
 - 2. Points made by HW proving routine improper classification
 - 3. Comment ~~xxx~~ on mandatory review and decision to withhold until now.

B. Possible intended use in current legal actions

1. To discredit the overclassification system
(Relevant to Watergate "national security" arguments)
(Overclassification in general has been discussed in III.A.2. Here, present the 'sensitive' areas which were given the false national security cloak. This would be an easy way to bring in the juicy items which are too minor or unrelated for II.B., such as
 - a) Wade's payoffs to the Ecuadoreans
 - b) Dulles on how to tie informants to you
(Hiss case - rug, p. 156: what is this about!)
 - c) The photo of the low back wound
 - d) The problem of relating the neck wound to the shots
 - e) ~~xxxxxx~~ Only one undeleted ~~xxxxxx~~ expletive: sheet (p. 177)
 - f) FBI issupposed to be penetrating the FPCC, etc. (P. 162-3)
2. To discredit Hoover as an obstruction to investigations
(Parallels to Erlichman's Ellsberg ~~xxxx~~ argument)
(Comment on release of Hoover ~~xxx~~ material laterly - Cointelpros, Kissinger taps memos, etc.)
3. Anything I have ~~xx~~ missed?
(If it is in fact used, comment directly on the use)

IV. NEW LIGHT ON THE INVESTIGATION

A. The transcript~~x~~ also decredits Rankin and Ford:

(The Commission investigation in general was already known to be hopeless; as already noted, that picture is confirmed here. In a nonobvious way, i.e. requiring comparison with other records, this shows up Rankin's factual distortions of the evidence and Ford's gross editing)

1. The ultimate source of the rumor
 - a) The overemphasis on Hudkins as ~~xxxx~~ opposed to Sweatt, ~~xx~~ Wade, and Alexander led to ~~xxxxxx~~ insufficient concern about the motives of the Texans.
(The possibility that the stories were intended to ~~xxxxxx~~ blame the FBI was recognized)(P. 133.21-22)
 - (i) Rankin's presentation misdescribes SS 767 as an interview of Sweatt, and led to a consensus that "this all stems back to Hudkins" (P. 181.7
Generally, Rankin's presentation does not coincide with ~~xxx~~ his own memo in a number of specific details.
 - (ii) Ford's edited ~~xxxxxx~~ excerpts go so far as to delete M Sweatt's name from the middle ~~x~~ of Sen. Cooper's sentence. (p. 24, P. 159.1)
2. The general nature of the discussion is badly distorted by Ford.
 - a) Omits totally points 2,3,4 in II.B., and seems to miss the point on item 1., the problem of getting info from Hoover rather than/and the primary sources.
 - b) He does this using unindicated ellipses, etc. This could have been a Nixon transcript. (Pick out the worst discrepancies.)

B. What happened after the Jan. 27 meeting (High points only)

1. Hoover's letter of 1/27 made the discussion obsolete:
He knew about the meeting, and wanted to be contacted directly.
Later turned out: he had interviewed Alexander on 1/25.
Hoover was quite emphatic. (See discussion in my manuscript)
2. Hoover undercut the WC in going to the newsmen.
Rankin was not going to let him interview Hudkins (P. 178-179), but he already had; he did so again, apparently at Rankin's suggestion.

He made it seem impossible to get Hudkins' source

~~(But maybe Hudkins)~~ (The Goulden ~~was~~ angle, including the sneaky trick of putting Goulden's interview ~~into~~ into 2 reports and ~~this~~ thus losing information, might be too complicated to discuss, but this would be the place for it.

3. The actions of the Texans
(Maybe mention Carr's letter with detailed suggestions for investigation of the FBI, not the Texas sources)
Jaworski's letter turning off the Hudkins investigation
4. The end result: (as briefly as possible)
The Commission got only affidavits and testimony.
The WR doesn't even ~~mention~~ mention the Texans' visit to Washington.

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Unclear antecedents, mistranscribed words, poor punctuation in the transcript:

(This list is from my notes and may not be complete. An outside reader would have to check this out.)

- P. 143, last line: quotation marks needed around "I never heard about the man."
P. 146, next-to-last line: ~~h~~ "hairs" not ~~theirs~~ "heirs" (!)
P. 147.11-12: I can't figure this out.
P. 153.15: "if he was a bad one": "he" might be either a misbehaving ~~an~~ employee, or a particularly notorious undercover agent. Can be read either way.
P. 155.4: "McCloy" should be "McCone." (Presumably a reporter's error; Ford did not ~~fix~~ fix it.)
P. 155.22 ff. One would have to hear Dulles' voice to know of he was implying that U.S. intelligence agencies do this too. Perhaps it was "Sometimes you - ~~the~~ in the Soviet, they did it all the time But on ~~the~~ occasion... (we do it too)" ???
P. 156.7-8: I don't recall any ~~rough~~ "rug" in the Hiss case. This could be a typo.
P. 160.11,14: is "they" the FBI or the other agencies which had just ~~a~~ been brought up.
P. 160.22, 161.3-5: is "they" the FBI or the RFK people?
P. 165.11. Perhaps this makes ~~a~~ sense if it is "because otherwise.... Certainly not." (The latter referring back to Boggs' point that Dulles wouldn't know all the informers himself.)
P. 168.5-6: No response to Dulles' intelligent question. Or was it inaudible? A shrug?
P. 180-1: makes sense with a "we" added: because if this should turn out that they (the FBI) knew it (that ~~a~~ we were investigating their credibility), and we never reported it, it would be a blow (to our relations with the FBI). The alternate reading, which has "it" ~~referring~~ being the fact that LHO was an agent, doesn't make much sense.
P. 181.8-11: I can't figure out Rankin's answer, beyond the "yes", ~~was~~ which should have been "no."
P. 181.13-14: JLR may have been saying they should talk to the other people on Hudkins' paper, or alternatively "get it out on paper," i.e. in the Warren Report.
P. 184.18: should end with ",..." or "--", not "."
P. 187.20-3: Perhaps "in an exhibit" should have been "in, and give it" or "and submit it," etc. I can't figure this out.
P. 195.8: "Collated" makes more sense than ~~collation~~ "collected."
P. 196.20-21: Russell's comment does not make sense - mistranscribed?
P. 196.23: Speaker not indicated, probably Boggs (cf. next page).
P. 208: the senator leaving is Russell; ~~a~~ Cooper remains (see p. 211.5)
P. 212.3: "The plot thickens" is right, that's for sure, but what was McCloy talking about?